because, in spite of the great love for children, in spite of the intimate relationship between father and son, the Negro is simply not able to endure the effort of working unless the prospect of payment is constantly before his eyes. The price for strangers, to be paid in advance, is 100 spears or a small sheep, in return for which the medicine man will teach his pupil all the cures that he knows.

The medicine men do not have any special social status, authority, or influence. In general, they are regarded only as experienced and skillful persons (ákón, i.e., "skillful"). Only those among them who know the medicines of sorcery and give this knowledge to others (including the cult leaders who, by means of a magic medicine, give the cult figures the power to practice sorcery) are feared, and rightly so, because one suspects that with the help of these "medicines" they may practice sorcery, i.e., kill other people, at any time.

1. Medicines for Sorcery

We have seen in the previous chapter /Ed., not translated/ that the sources of belief in sorcery are to be sought in the need to assign causes for unrecognized internal ailments, particularly malaria and poisoning. Because of the similarity of their symptoms, these two cannot be distinguished by European outsiders,/145/ and even the native inhabitants for the most part find it impossible. At the moment, therefore, it is not possible to obtain a clear picture of these things. It is certain that the Negroes know how to get someone out of the way with poison and that they mix poison with the conscious intention of killing, but it is uncertain to what extent they are conscious of the physiological effects of poison in our sense. As far as I could observe, a generally mystical view of these matters still prevails. All poisoning, just like all internal illness, is sorcery, and all sorcery is the mystical operation of the physical being, detached from the body, that finds its strength in its evil which has been developed through medicine (see Section 11/Ed., not translated/. If someone wishes to kill a person

154 or to make him ill, he prepares a medicine which serves to strengthen his ewu and, at the same time to stimulate it anew and in a particular way for the occasion to point out the direction of the victim and to provide the power for the sorcery. In this way also, the cult figures were transformed by a medicine into active magical beings. From the sequence of medicine, ewu, object of the sorcery, the ewu was later omitted, so only the direct effect of the medicine on the object remains. Thus, instead of killing through sorcery, we have direct poisoning. Among the Pangwe these things are as yet still confused. Only among the Jaunde does there appear to be the beginning of a separation between the two, inasmuch as they do not unquestioningly surrender to their fate, but instead attempt to investigate the poisoning and to find and punish the murderer. In so doing, however, barely escaping this Charybdis, they are caught on the Scylla of legal murder; in view of the difficulty of finding the culprit, they proceed in a [412] very summary manner. If, for example, a chief dies, presumably poisoned by one of his wives, all of them or at least very many of them will be punished by death.

154 238 The most common sorcerous medicine used for poisoning is nkâ, with which we are already acquainted as a medicine for giving power to the cult figures. It is prepared in three different ways, as white, red and black nkâ. As a rule, all three contain toad poison. In addition, the white one usually contains:

1. fine, sharp-edged splinters of ground cowry shells, mica (ebîb e dîjo, "scales of leaves"), or glass;

2. skull bones of a man who has been dead for a month and who must have died on the same day that he was taken ill;

[125] 3. toad, Bufo superciliaris Blgr. (nvêk) dried and grated;

4. lizard, Lygosoma fernandi Burt. (ebê'maidîdî'), prepared in the same way (see "Religion" /Ed., not translated/). /144/

5. the poisonous roots of the Dioscorea macroura Harms (dzîbi IV), dried over a fire and grated;

6. poisonous hairs of the Leguminose Mucuna pruriens D.C. (eîgîlo' eîgîlî', that is, leaves from the fan, e.g., leaves of death); at times also

7. scraped and charred rind of the Leguminose Detarium macrocarpum Harms (enîk), with whose symbolic significance

we are already familiar.

Another mixture consisted of ground mica, a toad, and ground snake fangs.

The red nkɨ̀ usually contains:
1. Lygosoma fernandi Burt. (see above).
2. a red crab from the forest (nkɔ̀ŋ̀ŋ̀ɔ̀ bɨ̀ŋ̀dɔ̀) (1).

1. The animal is supposed to make a sound that is reproduced by ŋ̀ŋ̀, ŋ̀ŋ̀.

3. a kind of scorpion (nɨ̀ɨ̀ŋ̀), ground.
4. a chameleon, ground.
5. Mucuna pruriens D.C. (see above).

The black nkɨ̀ contains:
1. ngɔ̀-ekɔ̀ŋ̀ or ekɔ̀ŋ̀-ekɔ̀ŋ̀, fungus soil dried and ground;
2. ekɔ̀ŋ̀, a fungus growth that lives under water, which is supposed to be very poisonous;
3. nɔ̀ŋ̀ŋ̀ ngɔ̀ŋ̀, a centipede which is greatly feared because of its poison.

The preparation of nkɨ̀ is carried out in the most ingenious manner by expert medicine men. For this purpose, the men sew for themselves a special suit made of the back of the ondɔ̀n tree (Fig. 50). This suit resembles a long shirt and leaves only the head and hands exposed; these parts of the body are then rubbed with an extract of Heckeria subpeltata (Wild.) Kunth (ekɔ̀ŋ̀ndɔ̀ŋ̀ŋ̀), principally in order to protect them against the very poisonous hairs of the Mucuna that fly about. With this preparation, the poison mixers proceed to pound the dried components in a pot and mix them by stirring. For this purpose they use a long stick so that they can stay as far away as possible from the poisonous mixture. Indeed, they go even further and call upon old leprous persons to collect and pour the poison into little horns or bags (Fig. 51), since in their case it would not matter if in the process they were to become sick or even die.

The finished mixture is a bone-dry and extremely fine powder. It is not immediately put to use, but first tried out on dogs. By leaving out certain ingredients, such as the Mucuna hairs, or by means of other combinations, the poison mixers -- so various informants emphatically affirm -- are able to shorten or lengthen the victim's period of suffering at will or to produce only illness without fatal results. /147/

The medicine sold by the medicine men (because of its tendency to decompose rather rapidly, it does not keep very long) is used in the following ways. Either it is mixed with the food or sprinkled on the head of the bed or the floor -- merely inhaling the stuff, it is said, produces severe illness. Otherwise it is buried near the surface where the victim usually sits. The Nkum, furthermore, mix the poison with the pulverized resin of Alstonia congiensis Oliv. (ndjime) and then place in it for five days the pieces of iron with which they load their rifles.

Concerning the frequency of secret murder by "sorcery" or murder by poisoning, Europeans certainly have no accurate /Fig. 50 appears here in the original text/ conception, since without further ado we tend to ascribe deaths in the unhealthy regions of tropical Africa to malaria. At the same time, the importance, even for us, of investigating this matter precisely is demonstrated by the following fact. In the small Campo region (disregarding the coastal strip), which has been visited by Whites only in the last few years, no less than six merchants have been poisoned within this short period of time, attempts were made to poison two others.

The effects of the medicine of sorcery, whenever it is a question of poisoning in our /Fig. 51 appears here in the original text/ sense of the term, for instance, poisoning food, depend on its composition. According to descriptions, it produces either terrible pains in the abdomen, as though "fire were penetrating the bowels," or the symptoms are those of blackwater fever, among others, dark urine, or it produces paralysis; thus, there is a great variety of effects so that correct diagnosis is extraordinarily difficult.

If someone believes he has been poisoned or exposed to poisoning, he employs special antidotes concerning whose value

[Text continues on page 9]

2: Tasmania--0 E-S (1904-1909) 1913 F119 Fang F119

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Fig. 50. Shirt for Mixers of Poisons, Akonangi (Enandan Family). Strum.

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Fig. 51. Bone Container for Poison, Mandimu (Ojek Family).

I am, of course, unable to judge. /148/

In the class of preventives are the leaves of Phyllanthus gracilipes Pax (esɨ́ɨ́ elɨ̌), which are eaten whole or ground. As an antidote for poison in food, the Jaunde use the Corynanthe pachyceras K. Sch. (eyɛ̄) and the Sida acuta L. var. carpinifolia K. Schum. (sɨ̄ɨ̄m IV), the leaves being ground and eaten. In the Fang region a medicine consisting of the following ingredients is used:

1. Heckeria subpeltata (Wild) Kunth (abɨ̌ɨ́mɛ̌dzɨ́ɨ́n), the leaves or stalks ground;
2. ripe bananas (adɨ̄ɨ̄e) cut in pieces;
3. Sterculia tragacantha Lindl. (edzɨ̄ɨ̄le), bark scraped off;
4. Pachylobus macrophyllus Oliv. (andɔ̄ɔ̄ɔ́m), bark scraped off;
5. Abrus pulchellus Wall. (oze zɔ̌ge III, eloenɨ̌ɨ̌, "herb to counteract nɨ̄ɨ̄"), leaves ground;
6. Desplatsia dewevrei De Wild et Burs. (afɨ̄ɨ̄nɨ̌ɨ̌k), bark scraped off.

These six ingredients are placed in water, and then the extract is drunk. As an antidote for poisoned bullets, the first three of the above are mixed together, and the mixture is eaten dry.

A further use of nɨ́ɨ́ is called zɨ̄ɨ̄, from zɔ̌, "leopard," because the whiskers of the leopard are used for it. Just as the leopard tracks its victim /Fig. 52 appears here in the original text/ by means of its whiskers and then treacherously pounces on it, the nɨ̄ɨ̄ thrower wants the same effect. A piece of such a whisker about half a centimeter long is drawn through a fruit of the umbrella tree, Musanga smithii R. Br. (asɔ́ɔ́n), Figure 52, to form a small missile which is dipped in the magic medicine and then hurled at the opponent. If it hits the opponent's skin, he is supposed to get sick and die within three to six days. I myself once had an experiment performed with this "poisoning" -- something I felt justified in doing in view of the natives' conviction concerning its purely mystical effectiveness. Naturally the experiment was unsuccessful. Meanwhile, this did not disconcert my informant; he thought that perhaps the medicine he had been given was not the right one. Aside from being put on whiskers, nɨ́ɨ́ is also sprinkled on darts which are shot from ambush when the

754 enemy happens to be dancing with other people at some festivity
674 and in the general excitement does not notice when the missile hits him.

As a preventive against ȥ̌ɔ̌, a medicine is recommended
754 which consists of:
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1. Albizzia fastigiata (E. Mey.) Oliv. (sɔ̌'ne), ground resin;
2. Musanga smithii R. Br., ground involucral leaf (it is slippery); /149/
3. Pouzolzia guineensis Benth, Urticacea (mbɔ̌ɔ̌nɛ̌ III), its leaves ground;

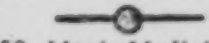

Fig. 52. Magic Medicine of a Sɔ̌ Thrower, i.e., a Sorcerer or Poisoner.

4. Heckeria subpeltata (Wild) Kunth. (abɔ̌'mɛ̌dzɛ̌'n), stalk scraped off;
5. Corynanthe pachyceras K. Sch. (evɛ̌), its leaves ground;
6. an unidentifiable Euphorbiacea (ayɔ̌), its leaves ground.

This medicine is added to the red wood which is smeared on
[302] the body as a festive decoration.

2. Medicines for Acquiring Luck and Warding Off Misfortune

777
751 I combine these apparently different medicines because there is a number of them that serve both purposes, the acquisition of good fortune and protection against misfortune. Medicines for warfare, for instance, give one unerring aim as well as protection against bullets. The majority, to be sure, are specific means for obtaining luck or warding off misfortune. The Pangwe designate them as biɛ̌ŋ because they are intended to guard against an illness, for he conceives misfortune or the endangering of his good fortune as an illness. We shall do best to take over this conception and to call these devices "medicines." The medicines for good luck are supposed to bring, above all, wealth and good fortune in love, shooting, setting traps, catching fish, and wrestling. The medicines for wealth (biɛ̌ŋ akū'ma) are based in part on the

777 conceptions developed in connection with the veneration of
751 ancestors, concerning the influence of the ancestors, who live where Nsambe does, on the terrestrial well-being of their
754 descendants. The most important of the medicines for wealth,
777 asum or aseb, that is, the Mekuk medicine, is based on the ideas of sorcery which I discussed in the previous section /Ed., not translated/. The skulls needed for the ancestor cult are not in
[169] this case those from relatives who died a natural death, but from those who were murdered secretly by sorcery (poisoning). Each bi̱ʌ̱ akū'na, therefore, is a nsōm, a sin. The murder victims,
[824] or rather their souls, are called mekɪ̄k (1). A person who keeps

1. Etymologically related to nkɔ́k, "upper part of the body." Perhaps we have here an intentional circumlocution, because the Pangwe like to avoid the real designation for their mesōm (sins).

the skulls in order to acquire wealth is called e mōde a bɛ̄ɛ̄ mekɪ̄k (= e mōde a n'a mekɪ̄k), that is, the man who has the Mekuk. I have known a Mekuk man who had no less than ten skulls of his murdered relatives in his house. In addition, the Mekuk man possesses magical devices which he sells on request together with the skulls in exchange for an excessive payment from people who themselves want to become Mekuk men. The latter are of course only sorcerers, that is, people who -- as was said in Section 12 /Ed., not translated/ -- receive the power to practice sorcery in their youth through a medicine, but who perhaps until then had not yet used their power and now want to train themselves in the specialized field of Mekuk medicine. For this purpose, their teacher demands that they murder a close relative, usually a father or mother, and bring him the skull. He himself will give them in exchange an older /150/ skull from his own collection and in addition frequently the back bones. The first
[608] skull of a Mekuk collection is therefore one of a stranger and has already been effective as a medicine. It is not an actual ancestral

skull, but may be regarded as such because all the Mekuk people enter into a kind of kinship relation with one another and the skull medicine that has been effective for one will likewise be successful for the others. In this way the new Mekuk man is able to go on murdering and chooses his victims from among his closest relatives, older brothers, sisters, brothers-in-law, uncles, etc., in order to become rich through the mediation of the souls of his victims who do not suspect that the sorcery (or poison) of their dear relative made possible their sudden reunion with Nsambe. Wealth acquired in this way naturally also includes the inheritance which is thereby more speedily obtained. The effect of the magical medicine is described in the following manner. The Mekuk man places the medicine in a cloth and offers this to his brother, for instance. If the brother has "sense," he may say: "Oh, formerly you used to buy many pieces of cloth and gave none of them to me! What's the idea of this piece of cloth now? I don't want it!" Then the Mekuk man himself becomes ill. The Mekuk man may offer his hand to his brother when he returns from a journey, having first sprinkled a medicine into it. Most frequently, however, the medicine is given to a cock which, according to one informant, has its tail feathers plucked out; the cock is then given as a present to a relative home from a journey. If the relative eats the animal, he is supposed to die, but if he refuses it or secretly throws the animal away, the Mekuk man will become ill and die. In still other cases, the medicine is poured into a tobacco pipe, bush salt, or food. Whether any of this has a physiological effect or not must remain undecided, as I have already said on pages 3 and 4.

Even the Mekuk sorcerer believes that a failure of his attempt would result in his death, as we saw in Section 12 /Ed., not translated/ in the case of the wicked sorcerers. It is evidently assumed that if the person attacked notices that he is an intended victim, he himself goes over to the attack and on his part tries to get rid of the enemy. That is to say, according to the Pangwe conception, he sends his sorcery against that of the attacker. It is certain that this belief considerably limits the number of relatives murdered.

It is not the bark container known to us from Malan that is used to keep the Mekuk skulls, but rather a chamber dug under the floor of the house (Fig. 52). I saw a bark box used only once, placed on tall props reaching almost to the roof. The chest is divided into two sections by means of a dip in the bottom, and it is carefully leveled and smeared with red wood (hence, the name anum from ánúm, "section, /151/ /Fig. 53 appears here in the original text/ room," which refers to the entire medicine). It is covered up by a piece of bark and a thin layer of dirt and thus remains hidden from strangers' eyes. Frequently a chest is placed over it also, or the little underground chamber is located under a bed. On the step-like raised part the medicines (b) are kept inside a circle made of plantain pieces (a). These medicines include nkí, above all, and furthermore bark scraped off the Pentaclethraceae [218] Oxyiocaulon cinnamomeioides Hook f. and Adenia lobata (Jacq.) Engl. (mvôndôlo a ndzîk) (1), leaves of evúlúme or ayóbe-bege, important because of the nodules in the leaves which make them look perforated like the ewu of a dead magician, and other things. Below the step the skulls (c) are set up in a semicircle so that they face the medicine.

1. Also used as fish poison (see Vol. I, p. 83).

[76-9] The skulls are cared for in a manner similar to the customary manner of treating the Malan skulls. Unlike the latter, they are not served food every day, but nevertheless frequently; sometimes chickens are slaughtered for them, and they are bathed in chicken blood and have chicken meat set before them.

[184] This medicine, which is unknown in the northern region (Jaunde), is quite widespread among the Fang and is the subject of many tales and stories which make all light men /Ed., men with light skin color?/ break out in a cold sweat. My boys were so excited by the [852] stories that they maintained they could not sleep if they kept thinking of these hideous Mekuk. Thus it is told, among other things, that the Mekuk walk up and down in their little room at night and make a hullabaloo or even come out of their room and thrash

2: Tessmann--04 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 1919 Fang 1919

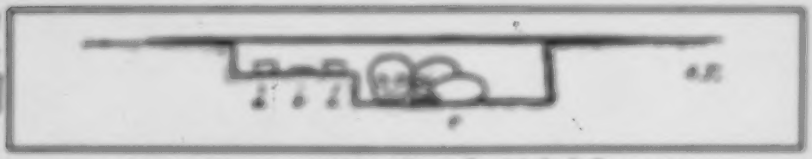

Fig. 53. Underground Chamber of a Mekuk Sorcerer. Cross-section.

(a) Circle made of plantain pieces, (b) magic medicines, (c) skulls of murdered relatives.

the Mekuk man's house companions in their sleep, so that they wake up the next day completely beaten up. They are also supposed to steal money and goods in order to take them to the Mekuk man. In short, the Mekuk stories remind one of the experiences of the man who wanted to learn to be afraid /Ed., in one of Grimm's fairy tales/.

Other medicines for wealth that utilize the power of the souls are more innocent; they do not require the murder of relatives nor care of the skulls. Instead, their powers are derived from the habitation of the souls, the Copaifera tessmannii Harms (ngon). The Mekuk skulls must be included only in the event the medicine man already possesses some. The procedure as a rule is as follows. The father of the person concerned goes with a medicine man, /192/ and both clear an area under a large Copaifera. Then a leaf vessel filled with water is set up, and into this some of the bark of the Copaifera is scraped nine times (three times three); furthermore a stone from the stomach of the crocodile is placed in it if one is available. A peculiar test of the worthiness of the young man is now given. Various objects are placed together in three piles: on the first are placed steamed cassava (women's food) and a basket (ebé'dá) carried only by old women because it has a small capacity; on the second, a rifle, a bundle of vegetables (ngon) with fish, brass ornaments, cowrie shells, and a piece of cloth, all of which are things that delight young people; on the third pile is placed a fly swatter (implement of the chiefs), a foot ring made of ivory, and a boiled chicken, in other words, such things as are allotted to chiefs. Now the young man is brought to the piles. "If he has sense," he will go to the last pile and consume the chicken. In this

777 Other medicines for good luck are used for successful buying (two), speaking and singing well (about a dozen), faultless drumming (two), wrestling (23), the Jaunde game of chance (eight), and to make edible plants flourish (nine, see Section 5 /Ed., Vol. 1/).

The second class of medicines discussed in this part consists of those used to ward off misfortune. In this category the most important are the medicines against theft (approximately 30), against adultery committed by the women (two), against the shrewishness of wives (one), against rivals among women (three), against forgetfulness and stage fright (three), against rain (only a few, see Section 14), against enemy weapons, against the consequences of cohabiting during the day (seven), of sleeping with pregnant women (for the last two cases there are even prophylactic medicines), and finally, against consequences that occur if one eats unclean animals (seven).

3. Medicines against Cult Maladies

784 In the description of the cults /Ed., not translated/ it was shown that transgressions of mores resulted in punishments in the form of illness. These cult maladies are real illnesses of the body, but they can be cured only by the power whose anger has caused them. For that reason, they could also have been mentioned in the description of the cults. Every cult power is able to impose a malady, so someone can be Seo sick (Seong-mba sick), Bokung (Elong sick), Schok sick and Ngi sick; we have already become acquainted with Malan sufferers. Since in the south Ngi is the most common and most feared cult power, the most frequent and most serious cult malady there comes from him.

785 I saw two cult maladies treated. One case involved a boy who pretended to have Bokung sickness because he did not want to work any more; the second case involved a man who had been shot in the chest during the war and claimed that he had been punished this way by Ngi.

Bokung sickness is supposed to be recognizable by the trembling

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11. ənlɛ́ I = eczema, Krätze /Ed., ?/.
12. ewɔ́ = scabies.
13. akɛ́ = herpes on the head.
14. ɛ́ IV = herpes on the skin.

Towards less serious internal ailments, such as intestinal disturbances, stomach pains, toothaches, and so forth, the Pangwe behave with comparative equanimity. Although they have come to realize that some of these are caused by immoderate eating, spoiled food, and so forth, they do not give up their accustomed way of life. Instead of following a sensible diet, they try to cure themselves by medicines.

Of internal illnesses the Pangwe have terms for the following: okɔ́ŋ ɲɔ́k, aŋɔ́k, akɔ́ = epilepsy; okɔ́n-nɔ́k = back pains (of a nervous origin); okɔ́n mɔ́m = heart disease actually, then mental illnesses because it is believed that nervous ailments proceed from the heart; okɔ́n nɔ́ = headaches; aɔ́ = lung ailments (consumption?); ɔkɛ́ma, mbɔ́mɔ́n I = common cold; okɔ́n kɔ́ = neck pain; nɔŋ I, usually used in the plural = stomach aches, intestinal pains (when shooting pains are felt); okɔ́n maŋɔ́, okɔ́n anɔ́ = toothache; nɔ́ I = rheumatic and nervous ailments; nɔ́-abɔ́m = stomach-aches (when twitching pains are felt); nɔ́-nɔ́k = rump pains; nɔ́-wɔ́ = arm pains; okɔ́n makɔ́-ɛlɔ́n = hemorrhoids; okɔ́n mɔ́s = eye diseases; nɔ́k I, mvɔ́s = inflammation of the eye; dɔ́ɔ́ VII = sty in the eye.

The principal parasites are: evɔ́ = eye worms; aɔ́ = sand fleas; and nɔ́n IV = lice.

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As regards the origin of these afflictions, elephantiasis of the scrotum and the legs is attributed to sorcery; all other serious illnesses are attributed to the cult powers which impose them as a penalty for sins committed. At the head of this list is leprosy, whose name zɔ́m should therefore be derived from the root a sɔ́m (see page 13 /Ed., not translated/), "to extend one's hands to punish, to punish." After that come frambesia and incurable festering boils. The cult powers cause these afflictions either independently and on their own initiative, or the cult powers are utilized in the performance of certain symbolic ceremonies with objects connected with their cult. If the Ngi is invoked, for

759 example, in the case of the theft of some food, a bit of the remains of the food, such as chewed sugarcane, is put in a rifle and fired off, or the chewed sugarcane is put in the smithy pit in place of iron and belabored with the bellows. In still other cases, this same sugarcane is placed with a pepper twig in the burrow of [125] a Lygosoma fernandi Burt. (the scincoid lizard), and a fire is lighted under them. In all /171/ these cases the fire is a symbol of the Ngi (fire cult). Another time the Sso is called upon. If, for example, someone has stolen a wild animal from a trap, the hairs still sticking to the trap are placed in a halved Negro banana [126] (the plant sacred to the Sso) or on a halved piece of the Ancistrophyllum acutiflorum Becco. nkâne I (likewise a cult plant, but its significance is unknown to me), and the thief will then contract leprosy. Furthermore, the remnants of the stolen goods merely need to be placed on the path to a frambesia patient's toilet in order to cause the thief to contract frambesia. Such a manner of wishing an illness upon someone is called a pfûdi, from a pfûde, "to do, to lay, to do something to someone, to impose (lay) something on someone, to throw upon."

753 As the third cause of illness, the natives are familiar with the simple communication of diseases, infection (substantive, nkî hân I; verb, a kî hân), and the Pangwe know very well that frambesia is more contagious, whereas leprosy is less so.

In the case of less serious illnesses, some people may get the idea that the illness was invoked in some way by offended or harmed companions. In general, however, people do not think about causes; the illness simply comes by itself.

[149] Among the Jaunde the a pfûdi is unknown because the cults [759] are not so highly developed as they are among the southern Pangwe. The Jaunde often blame sorcerous beings.

759 The fee for treatment of disease is variously handled. In the case of leprosy the medicine man receives 110 spears (seven marks) or a small goat, if his art has been of some help -- otherwise he receives nothing. In the case of frambesia and illnesses of the ewu he receives in advance a chicken, as well as the head and heart of the goat that is slaughtered so that the patient may drink the blood. If the cure was successful, he is paid 50 spears. In the case of less

821 773 539 Thus Ensemnfemabige became very wealthy, and from this money alone he was able to purchase two wives.

Now it happened that he and all the people were gone one day, and only his son, Ekute, stayed behind. Then several people from a distant village appeared, but they had brought with them only two choppers (2), and in exchange for these they demanded

2. Bush knives valued at two marks.

to see the snake. Ekute, however, did not want to show it to them. The people argued with him and threatened, and they demanded to see the snake. Then Ekute, who was very imprudent, angrily took a chopper and knocked in the top of the house wall instead of carefully opening the door somewhat and letting the people look in. Thereupon the snake came out, went to the village square, and cried "See, now I am leaving." But the people and Ekute had run off. Thereupon the snake raised its head and body and swung itself into the air. At this very moment Ekute's father came back and was just able to cut off the lower end of the snake; the other part of the snake was already high up in the air and still stands in the sky today as the rainbow. The tail, however, turned into the python, and from the eggs there crept forth all the other little snakes. /201/

821 749 [754] The storm is likewise represented as the handiwork of an evil sorcerer. Whenever a great sorcerer is dying, he unleashes a storm, lays low the plantain fields of those people toward whom he feels ill will, destroys their houses, and indeed, he goes so far as to knock down their children in order to injure them. Anyone who has experienced a tropical tornado will understand the notion of the Pangwe that sorcerous beings are at work. The natives also have medicines against storms; the storm is gradually weakened if [824] one places young macabo leaves (these are weak to begin with) on the fire (whereby they become still weaker) and then grinds them to a powder on the ground in front of the house (this makes them weakest of all). Conversely, the storm is "made heavy" and thereby held back in the sky by placing a stone on Paspalum grass (obŭ't), which, because of its toughness and strength, is supposed

S: Balandier--93 E-S (1946-1951) 1956 FWS Fang FWS

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des Mfang [The Ésí of the Fang]."
Anthropos, Vol. 1, 1906.

interesting for the last point it brings up. It indicates a test. It shows above all with unquestionable brutality that all power existing outside the clan and the kinship is acquired only after making the more or less symbolic gesture of "killing the kinship." It is by the interplay of [145] such groupings that the logic of the system of kinship and of alliance by marriage is transcended.

"Associations" have a function whose import varies according to particular circumstances. They intervene to create a better cohesion between clan fragments, as is shown by the grouping of initiates at the Bwiti (Gabon cult) or at the Sub (Cameroons cult known to the frontier villages), this at a time when insecurity demands a minimum of union among related villages. In other circumstances, they attempt to reinforce the inherent power of functions whose importance is affirmed: as in the case of groupings that controlled the ancient "dance of justice" (obwana) at the time when peaceful settlement of conflicts remained the only one possible, and when the role of "peacemaker" was of primary importance. As is shown by the feminine "associations," they may also act as a curb on the domination to which a social group of inferior status is subjected. This is all the more marked as the decay of these groupings has been paralleled by the change in the relations between the sexes. We have pointed out, in connection with the Ngil, that "associations" have acted as the mechanism for higher appeal for the purpose of pacification. We must now stress the fact that some of them assume an almost permanent role of opposition to the social order.

[171]

754 776 782

Such is the case of the "association" of men known as sorcerers (pl. bŏyém), who endeavor to acquire permanently, and in their own personal right, "wealth, strength, and power." Each one has been admitted in terms of an absolute differentiation – the possession of a "spirit" called évu(r) (1) which is physically distinguishable (1) – and with a special initiation, the latter entails the

1. Cf. H. Lavignotte, L'évur, Société

S. Belandier--94 E-5 (1946-1951) 1950 F919 Fang F919

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des Missions Evangéliques, 1947; E. Trénenem, op. cit., II, L'évur, pp. 68-74; M. Briault, op. cit., Captain Maignan, op. cit. We point out that this is a belief which is widely spread throughout South Gabon and as far as the country of the Ba-ndzé.

obligation to break off (more than symbolically) the ties of kinship and alliance: by the sacrifice of the first child if a woman is in question, and of the maternal uncle if it is a man.

759 The évur is received before birth or during the first week
776 following birth. It transforms the organism of the individual carrying it since it can be detached at the time of an autopsy; (2)

2. It is described as follows: "It is a beast with paws, eyes, a mouth, and a tongue ... it can travel through the body ....." M. Briault, op. cit.

biologically the possessor (nnèm) and the évur are linked together; the latter "grows with the child and attains its full vitality [146] only when the child becomes an adult." Their respective powers are dependent on each other and demand sacrifices for their preservation. The bond between the two is continually shown by the play of interdicts and special obligations from which the nnèm "cannot free himself." Everything contributes to make the nnèm feel he has a different nature; even the ritual at the time of the two fundamental ceremonies celebrates the "birth" of the new nnèm and his "maturity" which permits the acts of domination. H. Lavignotte writes: "The évur lives in the body of its possessor, allowing him to split himself in two, or rather to leave his body to act in his place, to know the secrets of the other bòyèm (plural of nnèm) to increase his strength tenfold, to do extraordinary things that will make him rich, to kill without leaving a trace." E. Trénenem completes this account by specifying: "Except in the case of acting for the benefit of its possessor ... the évur is always

G. Balandier--95 E-6 (1946-1961) 1966 F919 Fang F919

754 776 harmful."

Thus we find asserted the use of an uncommon power for strictly personal ends: this power, called sĕn ngwĕl, is that of the *évur* in action. The characteristics of domination and radical differentiation are emphasized (to the point that the possession of the *évur* "is indispensable to anyone wishing to be" a magician (1)) in opposition to the system of the relationships of kinship

1. E. Tressemm, op. cit., p. 72.

(implying "fraternity" and a leveling tendency) and of alliance by marriage (implying reciprocity and co-operation). While "associations" such as the Ngil or the Abĕm have a licit function, which places them in the heart of the local society, the mĕbĕm as a whole constitute a foreign grouping which is fundamentally heterogeneous and for that reason extremely dangerous. The bonds existing between bĕyĕm, which become a reality at the moment of the two ceremonies of presentation and initiation, do not exclude competition, for the *évur* may quarrel among themselves. The quality of being a mĕbĕm liberates the individual to a great extent. It allows him to assert himself against the established order (he can threaten those who maintain it), but it also imposes a near solitude, a state of continual aggression and defense, a dangerous existence, as is shown by the violence of collective reactions at the time of the punishment of sorcerers. (2) The symbols

2. Cf. V. Largeau, op. cit., "... when he is recognized he is burned alive or massacred and eaten."

used and the formula pronounced for the presentation of the *évur* indicate the hoped-for advantages (glory, wealth, and numerous progeny) but also express the indispensable qualities (virility and courage).

754 [147] These facts reveal a radical form of opposition to the clan system. They represent the most individualizing and

S: Balandier--96 E-S (1946-1951) 1955 FWB Fang FWB

revolutionary part of Fang magic. One may see a kind of "fixation" of feelings of aggressiveness and individuality which are thwarted by the sentiments imposed by tradition (1) (the nsém is

1. The English anthropologist G. Lienhardt analyses the Dinka magic in "Some Notions of Witchcraft among the Dinka," Africa, Vol. 21, No. 4, October, 1951.

tolerated so long as there is no evidence of his harmful activity). One must also recognize in the nsém a means of differentiation, an internal source of profound changes (2). The bilyém are the

2. For the role of differentiation played by witchcraft, cf. G. Davy, La Foi Jurée [Sworn Faith], 1922. On this role and on the transformations of the social organization, "the margin of liberty," born of the conflicts between the religious clan and magic brotherhoods, cf. G. Gurvitch, La Vocation actuelle de la Sociologie [Real [or Present-day] Vocation of Sociology], ch. 7, especially pp. 412, 436, 503, 523-524.

elements that carry on the most violent and the most lasting disputes with the total society. However, the attitude of this society toward them is ambiguous. The distinction between a "good" and a "bad" évur, while both are dangerous to a normal man, proves this. They create a necessary threat.

IV. Relations between the Sexes and the Generations, and the System of Interdicts

182 The present-day study of Fang society, as we will show in the next chapter, reveals two types of outstanding problems, those connected with the change in relations between men and women

the law has not changed on this point. "No bride price, no marriage" —*Se nsoba, ve ala' e se kik*. We shall find this principle again in connection with legitimate descent.

Thus it is the absence of payment of the *nsoba* that gives their character to free unions, *fhom*, and to adultery, *minjan*, and makes them really infringements upon the law of property, justifying the fact that customary courts logically refuse to impose a penalty in a case of *fhom* when the girl returns to her family pregnant (2).

2. This is hard for some magistrates to understand.

A husband must provide his wife with lodging and clothes and must clothe any children he has by her. He must clear the field she will cultivate, provide her with household utensils and, in theory, with meat. He must allow her to visit her parents, to whom he owes respect. He must not use sorcery (3) against her and must respect the

3. Likened to sorcery are *bilatio* and sodomy, the grounds for numerous divorces from former members of native infantry regiments.

prerogatives of rank that she holds among her co-wives; he is supposed to sleep with her when she is not menstruating nor pregnant nor nursing. He must not beat her beyond what she can stand nor expose her vulva in public. /54/

A woman owes obedience to her husband, to her mother-in-law, and to the first wife, respect to her affinal relatives, therefore to her husband's clan; she must be faithful to her husband and perform her conjugal duty. She is responsible for cultivating the plots cleared for her, for fishing with weirs, for feeding her children, taking her turn at cooking for her husband, for keeping her hut clean and that of her husband when she is sleeping with him, and for helping to build them (it is she who applies the banco onto the frame). She does not have to take care of imported household equipment and clothes because these are *bŏm* of a masculine nature (but the schools and missions are trying to train women to do so). Finally, and above all, she must be prolific: this is her first duty and a great deal will be forgiven her if she performs it.

[575] preceded by drummers and trumpet players and by a boy (uncircumcised?) entrusted with holding across the village street a liana, which the carriage broke through only after sacrificing a chicken. The uncircumcised did not have the right to be present at this procession. The [348] ngil leader, masked and painted in red and white, carried his personal bieri (bieri); he was always accompanied by a full orchestra [336] (mvet guitar, mbaf and nkul drums, ewjet balafon). The initiation ceremony lasted a month (1).

[349] 1. The ngil mark was a tattoo below the sternum, therefore covered by the loincloth. Initiates did not go out except in masks, so that theoretically it was impossible to recognize them.

Members of the ngil circuit-d in small groups, masked, to carry [359] out inquiries in villages where a case of sorcery was suspected or to put sorcerers to death. For ordinary cases they applied the ordeals in current use (minkal), but for serious cases it was necessary to arrange for an initiation ceremony. this feature is found in nearly all ritual associations, where initiation is always accompanied by collective catharsis.

[369] Among other masculine initiation societies the ndôngô rite must be mentioned, whose initiates have two incisions on the nape of the neck. Its symbolic /features/ include confession, purification, reclusion in darkness, passage through a narrow corridor or a low doorway, a liana-serpent, a consecrated lance, a sacrifice (2), a

[712] [719] 2. Dogs were sacrificed. Ndôngô canceled serious minsem /breaking a taboo/ like homicide or incest and allowed initiates to eat pork, mutton, and porcupine. (J.B.)

[725] horrible brew. The ritual animal was the tortoise. The purpose of this rite seems also to have been protection against sorcerers and, perhaps, to improve luck, ma'a. The initiation of circumcised youths, bekungu, is perhaps a juvenile form of ndôngô. Both survived until the Second World War. Ndôngô does not seem to set up

[illegible] as strong connection ties as does ngil; however, the initiation leader may belong to a different clan from the initiates.

[illegible] (bye-dzhye or nye?) is a purification and reconciliation rite, described by Father Guillemin for the Beti; it does not extend outside the realm of an ayôm (sorcerer).

Among the Bendom of Sengmélima, the Nkoumou of Ambam, and the Fang of Djoum, I found some medical society initiates who call themselves "snakes," using the proper word, benyo (sing. nyo), not the euphemism minkui elan (lit., fish tissue). Their specialty is treating bites and capturing and tending snakes. Initiates are known within the society under the name of one or another variety of snake, conferred at initiation. There are several degrees of initiation (three?): first-degree initiates /65/ are called bo' b'ayaŋ, children of the Dendrapsis; advanced initiates are bo' be nvom, children of the python. Their medical knowledge seems quite extensive; they claim, in particular, to be immune to /snake/ bites, thanks to the application of a special biaŋ (medicament) through incisions at the time of initiation. The main center of this association would appear to be among the Mekaé of Mbomessima, and it is therefore not properly Paherein.

All these ritual associations contributed to social order mainly through defense against malevolent sorcerers. The sorcerers, for their part, are often organized in secret societies in order to join forces against the organs of control and repression. Inevitably, therefore, these societies are ill understood. Nearly all of them must have included beyem (sing. meem), that is, bearers of évu. In fact, if one may be subject to possession involuntarily and even unknown to oneself, one may also nyoŋ évu, receive évu, always in the sense of a burden. A person entering a beyem association has to pay for his entrance by the sacrifice of a near relative and also accept the imposition of a special prohibition, the breaking of which (nsem) brings instant death.

The ze mimfaka (lit., road panthers), notorious under the name of leopard-men, were an association of man-eating sorcerers, a kind of counter-ngil (1). Nowadays what is involved may well be a

1. There are also independent ze mimfaka.

pathologically degenerate form of the ngil itself. In the course of a

judicial inquiry at Ambam in 1948 after a raid on ne mimfoka, an old chief who was a Protestant and an elder of his church declared, in so many words, that "the white race has weakened the ngil, and the beyem have taken it over; now it is the ngil of ngbwel /sorcery/."

The initiates of the kho or kun, a kind of magic that enables one to assume another person's strength without destroying his body, also seem to be grouped into a secret society with meetings every seven years.

Beyem associations do not usually include both sexes; male and female sorcerers meet together only occasionally, for orgiastic sabbaths.

The distinction between white and black magic is, nevertheless, difficult to draw the present time, and one can never tell offhand if the small groups springing up nearly everywhere to protect their members against bad luck by using, in addition to remnants of traditional rites, recipes copied from magic manuals printed in France, belong to the one or the other.

To come back to the traditional associations, we must underline /the fact that/ in them there was a complete separation of the sexes, to such an extent that women were often forbidden to speak the name of a men's society or to show any kind of knowledge, even superficial, of its rites. The prohibition was less stringent for men with regard to women's rites, since the nsem, the breaking of a taboo, was for them punished by physical incapacity or illness rather than by death. /66/

A women's rite like mevungu had both a village aspect, on account of its geographical framework, the jurisdiction of its huts, and an intercian aspect as a result of exogamy. Much less is known of these women's rites than of the men's, for the very good reason that men are not allowed to know anything about them. Missionaries have condemned mevungu as obscene: I have heard that initiates who have gone through the menopause are supposed to play a male role in dances miming coition, without being able to obtain the slightest proof or the least detail (1). What is certain is that this is a rite of

1. A woman "chosen for her large vagina" presided, seated with legs spread apart. Each initiate would go tickle her and pull the clitoris. (J.B.)

fecundity, of fertility, and also of the hunt: an unlucky hunter may have his wife initiated so as to ward off bad luck.

309 of the neck for the ___, a (secret) design on the sternum for the ngil; three horizontal marks on the nape for the ___, a line of "vaccination marks" on the inner surface of the arms, forearms, and thighs, and along the carotid arteries, for the serpent /associations/, etc.

308 Men wore their hair braided, or else they shaved the temples and parietal bones, leaving a sort of comb on the top of the skull, suggesting a gorilla's crest. There were special ways of dressing the hair appropriate for the different initiations. The moustache was worn only by the beaya Mvôl; the beard, a goatee, by a few aged men, often diviners. In our day men usually wear their hair short and coarsely combed; a central part, in the Lower Nigerian fashion, was very common around 1948 among factory hands, while former recruits went in for a crew cut with a frill beard /barbe en collier/. Many students wear a little goatee, and this style is now growing among the rest of the younger generation. Since up to now wearing a beard [745] was a sign of mourning, a political implication has sometimes been attributed to this fashion--but mourning beards are not trimmed. /88/

Women have many ways of doing their hair. In plaits, checker [745] board, "horns," etc. As a sign of mourning their heads are shaved, and they are not allowed to comb the hair that grows out before the end of mourning. The growth of beard or moustache that often [145 '169] follows menopause is considered a sign of sorcery. Stylish women pluck their armpits, and a few also remove their pubic hair, for reasons perhaps of elegance and hygiene, perhaps of ritual (is there a relationship between the name of the important female rite mevungu and mevul, meaning "female pubic hair?"). Padouk powder, baa, is still used in the way that henna is for both magical and aesthetic reasons, but European make-up, mainly lipstick, has taken its place among young fashionable women.

55 Bodily cleanliness is much in favor: men and women often bathe several times a day with plenty of soap. But it is common to see them put back on their well-scrubbed bodies perfectly filthy clothes, no doubt because bodily cleanliness is a much older practice than that of wearing clothes made of cloth.

c. Psychological Characteristics

131 Like the majority of known peoples, the Pahouin have a very flattering opinion of themselves, and the curious thing is that this

relations between the sexes, this emphasis to a great extent explains why no true peasantry has developed, but rather a class of nonpeasant planters, comparable in the last analysis to some of the European settlers. The Pahouin remain very much strangers and travelers on the land, whence the importance of personal property (in the legal sense) in their eyes. Nevertheless, a further development is in the making in this connection—described above (p. 96) which is leading to a strengthening of land ownership, /so that/ certain collective reactions in the way of procedure concerning land and domain suggest that we are witnessing, at least in the Cameroons, a genuine putting down of roots.

Tribal pride is still considerable, to the point of hostility between different branches of the group, but ethnic cohesion is found vis-à-vis outsiders and gives real unity to the Pahouin as a solid group.

2. The Individual Life Cycle

a. Conception, Gestation, Birth

A woman is considered pregnant, a nyoñeya abum, she has got a belly, when she has passed through four menstrual cycles, a nji yene ngon, without seeing the moon. Conception is supposed to be the result of the mixture of sperm, meyôm (with the same root as nnôm, pl. beyôm = male) and of menstrual blood, metyi me ngon, girl's blood or lunar blood; the length of pregnancy is calculated from the date when the last menstruation should have begun. Nowadays a pregnancy of nine months is considered normal, but some of my informants mentioned normal terms of eight or ten ngon (lit., moon or girl), a word that can as well refer to a calendar month as to a lunar month or a menstrual cycle. It is difficult for a man to obtain more precise information on this point since the subject is restricted to women. Besides, longer pregnancies are considered possible, though sometimes suspect; amenorrhea due to a fibroid growth is a proof of sorcery, the tumor being considered an évu. The fetus (for which the term is secret, forbidden, étyi, in any case for men, and probably for women uninitiated into mevungu) is thought at the beginning of gestation to take the form of a lizard, like the first man at the moment of the creation /of the universe/.

551 of his descendants, in whose person he will be repeated rather than reembodied. It should be remembered that jôé also means "authority," a notion that cannot be dissociated from that of name.

761 828 The cessation of vital functions, awu (from wu, to die), is not thought of as necessarily final: catalepsy, deep coma, anaesthesia, and real death are confused. It is evident that if the body is hurt during awu, a revival is impossible. A ghost, kôn (Fang, khun), is 754 not necessarily physically dead: one of the most feared forms of 828 sorcery, at which the Ndôn are reputed to be particularly expert, consists of separating a person from his nsisim, shade or double, by giving him the appearance of physical death, then in awakening the body which will thereafter automatically obey the sorcerer's orders and may be used by him for all sorts of ends, to go kill or steal, or, more prosaically, to work his plantations. Persons thus transformed into bekôn are recognized by their pallor, jerky movements, and haggard expression; they survive the experience /opération/ for only a few months before dying in great physical and moral agony (1).

1. I have reason—but no proof—to believe that this is more than a myth: perhaps the criminal use of a narcotic producing effects similar to those of Pentothal. A kôn, frightful to see, died at the Sangmélima dispensary in 1947. The judicial inquiry revealed nothing.

[276]

761 Death in the complete sense does not occur for some time after the cessation of vital functions, and funeral rites seem to have had the purpose of detaching the individual from his mortal shell. There 76 were two abodes of the dead. The bemie, those unblemished by ngbwel (sorcery by évu), crossed the river-of-the-west or the sea to go to the village of Zâmbe (Zobeyo, Nzame) in a cold country where their nsisim led a life rather like that in a terrestrial village where everything goes well (2). The beyem went down to étôtôlan, the

2. According to Trilles, this would have been Venus, otya alu, "the night's torch."

801 radical with feminine connotations (yi = to wish, also meaning "to need," "to cry"; it conveys an idea of "desiring," in contrast to kômbô, related to kôm = to arrange, put in order, do properly, and bo = to do, make, conveying an idea of "will"; the passive form of yi, yian, means both "duty" and "to be well," "to suit"). Much research needs to be done while there is still time.

d. Sorcery, Possession

754 Malignant sorcery, ngbwel, is generally attributed to a sorcerer, nnem (plur: beyem, cf. yem = to know, to dream), being possessed by a malevolent being, an évu (Fang, évur, évus). The évu is not an immaterial spirit but a living being, an animal like a crab or centipede, and lodging in the internal organs of the nnem. At an autopsy it is often found in the form of a polyp or tumor, a fibroid tumor in women. It may even happen that the nnem's body does not show such an indication, because the évu has escaped, but there will be some traces of it, fluids, distention of the stomach, colon, or gall bladder. In such cases, as has been said, the corpse is not buried in the usual manner but is burned, thrown into a river, or buried at a crossroads far from the village, in order to prevent the nnem's kôn from returning to haunt relatives and neighbors.

The possessed person may be unaware of the possession, but he is held no less responsible for the harm caused by the évu. The latter goes out at night while the nnem is asleep and feeds on the blood, metyi, hence strength, tyi of its victims, who fall ill, grow weak and die, or it eats their nlem (heart and lungs), which brings on madness or mental decay and often death, too. The évu also feeds on eggs, on metyi /sic/, and on milk, preferably women's milk (menyañ, from nyañ = to give the breast, cf. -nyañ = mother, in compound words), food which village people will not touch. When the évu has trouble in getting food, it may turn against the nnem and kill it for nourishment or, if the nnem is a woman, it may attack the children in her womb. Aside from these occasions, ngbwel is an advantage to the nnem, even when it is unconscious; he benefits from the strength accumulated by the évu during its nocturnal hunts; furthermore, the évu assists him, brings a sort of luck to his undertakings, which is natural, since the évu gains from the nnem's intermediation. This kind of luck, aséé (from a verb, séé, with like meaning: a nga séé

754 777 akum = he has become rich by ngbwel), is to be distinguished from ordinary, accidental luck, ma'a, by its lasting character, which soon arouses public suspicion — this is one of the visible symptoms of ngbwel.

754 683 The involuntary nnem was generally put to death, more easily than the conscious sorcerer, who knew how to protect himself. Nevertheless, it was possible to treat a nnem, by means of a very drastic purification involving physiological as well as psychological catharsi and sometimes by real surgical operations /117/, to which in most cases the patient succumbed. Today the European administration usually prevents the execution of beyem, but their relatives often succeed in persuading them to kill themselves. After an epidemic of meningitis at Ambam in 1948, two men and two young women, accused by a bwiti diviner of having caused the death of a dozen children by involuntary ngbwel, threw themselves into the N'Tem within the month. In former times, beyem were burned by being covered with wood in such a way as to prevent both the évu and their nsisim from escaping; they were also drowned or buried alive, preferably in the bed of a stream that had been diverted and was then turned back to its old course after the burial.

754 The conscious nnem is both more and less dangerous. Bound to his évu by a kind of pact, he directs its activity instead of allowing it to kill at random as the unconscious nnem does. Therefore, he is more dangerous to his enemies but less so to his kin, although the concluding and maintenance of the alliance with the évu requires him to sacrifice members of his family.

A nnem with a strong personality, tyi anen a nlem ayet, with great strength and a hard heart, can succeed in really controlling his évu and making it a servant that will procure him wealth and power, rid him of his enemies, and confer supernatural powers on him, such as the ability to be in two places at once /bilocation/, to move objects from a distance /telekinesis/, divination, etc. But ngbwel always remains a dangerous art. First of all, the nnem knows that he is condemned after death to be a white kɔ̂n, forbidden to cross the ékanga bekɔ̂n, the bridge of the dead, to seek the ancestors, mañ ayat, beyond the sea. There are immediate dangers, in addition to that final condemnation. First, the ever present risk that the évu will dominate the nnem and weaken the latter. Next, the risk of a kind of reaction if the évu attacks a stronger nnem or a mie well protected by a bian provided with white magic. Finally, /there is the risk/ of

754 the évu or the animal employed as assistant being killed during a skirmish, which would bring about the nnem's death.

Many people nevertheless regard these disadvantages as weighing little against the immediate advantages which the évu procures. Therefore some bemie (people without évu) have themselves initiated into ngbwel, and some beyem dedicate their children from birth (which has the additional effect of protecting them against the parent's évu). For this purpose beyem organize into secret societies (and these are really secret societies), well described by Trilles and particularly so by Lavignotte (no. 155).

754 Babies are dedicated by a nnem kinsman in a ceremony, aka'é, 852 before the umbilicus is healed (the évu is believed to enter through the umbilical lesion). A special taboo is imposed on the child, and a part of his body (finger, toe or even foot, hand or whole arm) is symbolically sacrificed to the évu with a slight letting of blood. From that time on, only the shade of the sacrificed part, its semblance, is believed to continue to exist. The child is then nkôman ngbwel /118/, prepared for the ngbwel, but he is not yet a nnem; if he were it would be discovered at the preliminary stage of the adolescent initiation, and he would be put to death. It is only at the time of initiation with the official rites that he becomes a sorcerer, kuli 754 ngbwel, through a further ceremony during which his "godparents" reveal to him that he has been "prepared," dedicated. He must then buy back the bodily part "sacrificed" at the aka'é by offering his "godparents" the body of a member of his family, killed and eaten by the beyem in circumstances about which little is known. What is 786 known suggests some of the sexual aspects of European witches' sabbaths 839 (apparently participants of both sexes, naked, practiced sodomy, bisôk, and profaned the ancestral relics, probably fragments of biéti). The initiation of an adult consists only of the akuli ngbwel, the aka'é being restricted to children.

754 Beyem meet periodically, aside from initiation ceremonies, in 788 order to "feed the bivu" in anthropophagous or necrophagous meals accompanied by obscene rituals. These meetings take place at the new moon in secret places in the forest, usually in clearings on top of hills or on islands in marshes — mmimie are afraid of stumbling by chance on one of these spots which, according to some of my in- 825 formants, are guarded between meetings by an aardvark, mvômesila. If such a place is discovered, a nnengañ is immediately called in to 755 perform a sort of exorcism.

perform a sort of exorcism. Sorcerers seem to be convened to these meetings by secret messages in the form of bundles of sticks notched according to a particular code, or in the form of the quipu. They are believed to reach the meetings by levitation or by sending only their nsisim while their bodies remain at home in a state of apparent death. This offers a good chance of getting rid of the sorcerer by burning his body, the disadvantage being that the nsisim survives, as does the évu, and that they than can be incarnated in an animal, which cannot happen if the sorcerer is burnt alive.

The évu may use various methods of moving about outside the nnem's body. Sometimes he leaves it in an invisible and immaterial form, but this method is exceptional. Most often he enters the body of an animal, generally a leopard, but sometimes a black snake, civet cat, gorilla, or chimpanzee, or even certain insects; the list is unlimited, but nearly always the animal in question is powerful or dangerous. The carrier-animal is then almost invulnerable, endowed both with human intelligence and with the powers of an évu. It is, however, possible to strike at it, with luck and good mebiañ, and any injury to the évu rebounds on the sorcerer. On the other hand, injury to a sorcerer during the évu's absence is not necessarily fatal to the latter, because the évu can survive in the body of the vehicle-animal. The latter is called nkuk (1), which can also mean "mask." It is

1. Among the Ewôndo, this term also denotes the good bekôn who appear in dreams to give advice to the living. (J.B.)

not clear whether there is a confusion /119/ with the élañela, as Trilles suggests, or with animal-bekôn, or with those who are beyem on their own account, or even with bingôngôt (bingungure).

There seems to exist alongside ngbwel a /kind of/ sorcery connected with abé nlem or mbia nlem, malignity of the heart, and having nothing to do with possession by the bivu. Thus practitioners of kôn, which consists of killing a person while leaving his body alive (see above, p. 134), would not necessarily be beyem in the strict sense. Likewise, many malevolent activities are only criminal deviations from permissible magic. Alliance with an animal, or incarnation in the body of an animal, or even the transformation of a magician into an animal, need not be malevolent or only becomes so

754 as a result of the magician's natural spitefulness (ézezam = wickedness, disorder; nlelañ = malevolence, from élañ = an evil act committed expressly and without necessity: a woe bot elan = he who kills for pleasure, ndan of the begôvina* from the German occupation until

*/No footnote is given to this puzzling phrase, but "begôvina" may mean "government people." —Tr./

the present). A protective bian against the beyem can be used against an innocent mie, a magical weapon, a spell against a brother. Such an action may constitute not only an érom, a delict, but also a nsem, a breaking of taboo, when initiation into magical technique included a prohibition against using it for evil ends. The same thing holds for the use of certain methods, illegal or immoral in themselves, even when the purpose is permissible or morally good: this is the case with the bian for /ensuring/ conjugal fidelity, which consists of the husband having his wife drink his sperm; with that for curing an illness by transferring it to another person (transfer to an animal or plant is permissible); with the use of certain mebian for fertility, etc. The commonest acts of sorcery do not belong in the ngbwel category (and perhaps also in that of the kôn) and would lead simply to a "civil" suit, neither more nor less than a case of assault and battery or a
683 "natural" homicide. Ngbwel, on the contrary, is always a capital crime, provided that the nnem be not too powerful to escape judgment or punishment.

e. Permissible Magic, Divination, Medicine

789 The first aim of licit magic is to fight against sorcerers, especially beyem, but that is only one of its aspects. In fact, it extends to all life's activities, and everyone uses it to a greater or less extent, aside from the specialists, ngengañ or ngañ, magician, mvimvi'i, diviner, mbibian, healer, and nyia bia, singer.(1).

793 1. Among the Ewôndo there used to be a sort of priest, nzómelo, often a chief, who received the first fruits of maize, blessed sowings, and presided over the ancestor cult. (J. B.)

791 suggest those of the sorcerers they were fighting, as do some of their procedures. Like them, /high initiates/ were capable of telekinesis and bilocation, etc. Trilles gives numerous examples, some of which he claims to have observed himself. Like /sorcerers, initiates/ could transform themselves into animals or make use of a dedicated animal, élañela. They killed people from a distance, especially by casting a spell on a token /temoin, "witness"/ of the classical type, or by acting directly upon people with their power, ngul, by forcing them to submit to their will. Like sorcerers, also, they could be victims through repercussion.

Considering the circumstances, it is not surprising that /121/ magicians and sorcerers have often been confused, nor that some magicians have been led into making evil use of their knowledge, nor, finally, that contemporary associations, like the mbuti (bwiti), intended to combat sorcery, have borrowed its methods, even in their criminal aspects.

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In addition to the magicians proper, there is the singer, ñyia bia, who plays an important role in all rites, including initiations. Every important rite and ceremony has its musical accompaniment, with a specific orchestra for the occasion, and a choirmaster, who leads the incantations and acts somewhat as a master of ceremonies, without himself participating directly in the sacrifice or the magical act. It is peculiar to the ñyia bia that he is present at the three major rites, sô, ngil, and ndôngô, as at all magic ceremonies, no matter what his affiliation; apparently he is not liable to the prohibitions concerning participation affecting zesé bôt, ordinary or profane people. He buys and sells or inherits his songs, is not assigned to a caste /n'est pas casté/, yet seems to have enjoyed a certain immunity during the wars of former times, but this may only have been the case with the most celebrated of the beyia bia. There are also female beyia bia, who enjoy the same prerogatives in feminine rites.

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Magical equipment consists, first, of the instruments appropriate to each rite, drums, horns, rattles, bells, the ngôma harp of the bwiti, etc., with a great variety of additional diverse objects: fly-whisks, akpwassa, sometimes mutilated; antelope horns filled with mebiañ; human and animal skulls and bones; pots and calabashes; engraved and decorated magician's spears; masks; the bwiti broken mirror; bikpwélé (iron "bride-price money"); shells, etc. Every magical act, every rite, has its own properties, the complete description of which would require a separate monograph for each. We

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791 754 The sorcerer also assumes several forms: he may be soothsayer, physician, priest, etc., but none of these different manifestations are either legal or accepted; they will always operate in a secret manner, and the sorcerer will be the agent of the secret and unacknowledged, the extralegal, cult. [406]

575 754 791 Just as we find two distinct persons nearly always in opposition, so we observe them presiding over two distinct types of association. And, unfortunately, just as practitioner and sorcerer have almost always been confused, so have the true secret societies directed by the former been confused with the secret societies (organized also within the tribe) that are quite different, often antagonistic, and under the authority of sorcerers, who create them and without whom they do not operate. The former are established to work for the well-being of the tribe, at least they were so originally and they still are on the whole at the present time. The others, on the contrary, are set up for the specific benefit of members and against the tribe.

[One paragraph omitted.--Translator]

The principal point at issue here is that the totems of secret societies directed by practitioners and the totems of secret societies directed by sorcerers are utterly different. We shall see later on how incorrect the term "totem" is in connection with sorcerers. While the first kind of totem are chosen entirely for the benefit of the individual who acquires them with no concern about the effect on others, the second are chosen by the owner with a view to the evil he can do with them to others. [407] Hence a profound difference in their selection: the first, like the totems of clan and tribe, can legally be any kind of living thing and are in fact, animals, birds, insects, trees, but only useful things, because the point is to benefit from their good qualities. There is nothing of this in connection with the second kind of totem: to injure others is the point, the unique purpose, the raison d'être; therefore, harmful animals like panthers, reptiles, and wild boars will be the first choice.

[Three paragraphs omitted.--Translator] [408-414 omitted]

[415] The practitioner's business is to have an effect upon good and bad "spirits." To call up good spirits as we see for

515 754 791 instance in the invocations of marriage songs; to fend off bad spirits, departed shades, ghosts, or apparitions and force them out of the village so they they will go far away and leave the living in peace; in brief, to protect in some manner those who invoke them -- this is the practitioner's role. The end is achieved through appropriate homage and sacrifices, either directly, by protecting the suppliant from bad luck and accidents, or indirectly, by making it impossible for the enemy -- whether spirit, shade, man, or object -- to do harm. All this is worship, religion, the practitioner's role.

But, on the other hand, to be master of these spirits, preferably of the malevolent ones, to seize the spirits, and to force both to do evil, is no longer worship or religion, but magic, and this is the sorcerer's business.

[Four paragraphs omitted. --Translator] [416]

We make the following generalizations:

The practitioner is the agent of the acknowledged cult, which is sometimes public, sometimes secret.

The sorcerer is the agent of the unacknowledged cult, which is always secret.

Both practitioner and sorcerer are leaders or members of secret societies. (1)

1. In place of "secret societies," which leads to confusion, it would be better to reserve this term, as has been proposed, for the societies set up by sorcerers and to use "confraternities" for those directed by practitioners.

Secret societies controlled by practitioners are within the tribe.

Secret societies controlled by sorcerers are marginal to, or directed against, the tribe.

791 Finally, the practitioner is priest, physician, healer, seer, according to whatever function his rank has him perform. Under this title he consults the fates, calls up spirits, etc. In ceremonies of the public cult, for instance, he is priest, seer, rain maker, the acknowledged intermediary between the world of the living and the other world. To sum up, he acts for the welfare of the tribe or of some of its members. In the last capacity he is seen as sacrificer at a child's birth, and as the principal agent in circumcision and in the ceremonies connected with puberty, the initiation of warriors, marriage, and death. He is called in for all illnesses so as to drive away the malevolent spirits who alone cause disease. [413] As physician he first uses magical formulae designed to liberate the good "influences" contained in the remedies he will administer. Next, he dispels evil "spirits" and calls upon favorable spirits, the ancestors of the race, to help him. Only after this does he proceed to give the remedy; then he again calls upon the aid of propitious spirits and dispels the bad ones. ...

Our Fan give the practitioner a special name; he is the ngân, a name common to the whole of Bantu Africa, where the phoneme [sic] may be found throughout the tribes, variously modified as m-gâna, n-gâna, m-hâna, gâna, ngân. ...

[Last paragraph on p. 417 omitted; pp. 418 to mid-420 omitted. --Translator] [420]

754 The sorcerer's social position is easily defined; not only does he have neither rank nor position in the tribe but even to apply the word "sorcerer" ... to a native is more than an insult, it is extremely imprudent. To call a Fan ngân or ngenngân is doing him an honor; if he is not a practitioner, he will give you credit for your good intentions and courtesy. Call him nlèm [he who casts bait] and the situation is quite different. First, he will peer around to see if anyone has overheard. If you are alone with him and [421] the stronger, or if he fears retaliation, you will be lucky to escape the gunshot or knife stab he will gladly give you, or the poison he might give you as soon as he has a chance. If there are people around in the village, it would constitute a serious accusation, which might cost him his life. ...

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754 In fact, the sorcerer is the person hated and feared above all others, the evildoer, whom one consults only when forced to it, because he controls occult forces and his power is recognized. ...

Nevertheless, in spite of this, sorcerers exist and will continue to do so for a long time for two reasons:

1. their social position in the tribe, not as sorcerers -- for I have just said that they have none on that score -- but because of their own personalities;

2. the fear they inspire, which will eventually lead to their death, but which does help them to maintain their positions.

754 791 Clearly, in everyday life and through the course of events, practitioner and sorcerer are often combined in the same person. A certain man, a religious minister respected by his family, a physician, and practitioner esteemed publicly, may also be a sorcerer, but then in the greatest secrecy, unless his position allows him to proclaim this attribute. In that case he will be universally feared and hated and will only keep going through terror and murder, and he will always fear for his life.

[Pp. 422, 423, omitted. --Translator] [424]

791 The practitioner carries on the cult and is the totem's minister only by a sort of delegation, a handing over of power from the head of a family. He has been seen in this capacity performing his part in important totemic ceremonies alongside the tribal chief, regulating ritual under his direction, in short, acting as his organizer, master of ceremonies, sacrificial assistant. In practice he often comes to supplant the chief and afterwards to transmit to his descendants the religious power usurped.

Even this predominant role will not be thought sufficient by the ngâña [practitioner]. He wants complete ascendancy and he attains it through the secret societies in which he alone is master, which have little by little encroached on the tribal organization and tend to supplant the family power of former times. In this way he is the true and sole minister of the totem of these societies.

754 But alongside the ngâña and the secret societies he organizes and controls, hidden as it were in their underworld, are the sorcerers, or bèyem, who are similarly ministers of totems which they have given to the secret societies they control -- ministers,

754 societies, and totems that are basically actually spurious copies of the first.

754 791 From this we are led to a study of the secret societies directed by both and of the very different, though often undifferentiated, role that practitioners [bɛ̀ngan] and sorcerers [bɛ̀yɛ̀m] play in them.

Chapter XIII

Practitioners and Sorcerers

Their Secret Societies

[Pp. 425-433 omitted, being mainly taken up with the theories of others. --Translator]

[434[[Three paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

575 In my opinion the secret society is derived from the tribal organization itself. The dominating position which the practitioner has been able to assume [in the secret society] comes from the role he has necessarily been called upon to play in the ordinary course of events. Similarly, the new totems given to initiates after initiation are only imitations of those bestowed upon them by their fathers at birth.

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator]

575 791 Before youths are admitted to membership with warriors, it seems quite natural to put them through a series of tests designed to prove whether they are really fit to play their part and to perform the services which the tribe demands of them. Consequently, girls and women are immediately eliminated, for the benefit of the male population. The series of tests cannot take place in the village in front of everyone; the compulsory elimination of some would, aside from other considerations, arouse violent resentment against the leaders and be followed by inevitable revenge. Hence the necessity for withdrawing to the background. The chief may appoint a representative, for instance an outstanding warrior, but there is no one better [435] fitted than the practitioner for this role and for taking a leading and soon

575 769 We are dealing here with a recognized though secret cult, an accepted cult, addressed to spirits and -- of especial importance -- to the spirits of ancestors. On this subject the practitioner is entirely in agreement with the chief and the tribal traditions.

● 754 575 But in addition to natural magic to which the practitioners are confined, so to speak, "there is another," says Mgr. Le Roy, (1) [437] "which claims to borrow its power and methods

> 1. La Religion des Primitifs [The Religion of Primitive Peoples], p. 340, "La Magie [Magic]."

from beings of the invisible world, from the disembodied ancestral spirits of men and even of animals, from independent spirits ....

"This anti-Religion has, like Religion, its worship, incantations, evocations, rites, fetishes, offerings, sacrifices, ministers, feast days, places of assembly."

First of all, it has its ministers, who are none other than the sorcerers. For this reason in the preceding pages [cf. Chap. 12--Translator] I have already tried to give a sketch of the sorcerer and to make a clear distinction between him and the practitioner by, describing the main traits of his personality, by sorting out a complicated whole in which many points meet and many lines cross and interpenetrate.

[Three paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

Leaving out everything not directly bearing on the subject under discussion, let us examine only the following points, which will show both the great similarities and considerable differences that, from the totemic point of view, exist between these two orders of phenomena.

1. Like the practitioners ... [438] sorcerers have united in secret societies for the purpose of assuring their vitality and power.

2. The feast days and initiation ceremonies have numerous points of resemblance. However, those of the sorcerers' cult exhibit a much more marked character of horror, cruelty, and especially an extreme immorality, and a hideous obscenity, dominated by a perverted cult of blood descent and procreation.

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3. The practitioners' secret societies all have their own totems. Each group has a guardian totem which carries out for them the role of the ɛ̄totore or the mvame of tribe, clan, or phratry. Yet, while tribal, clan, or phratry mvame may belong to any of the three kingdoms, animal, vegetable, or mineral, or even occasionally to the sidereal or the spiritual world, the secret society's totem is always an animal, a real animal, sometimes a reptile or fish, often a bird.

Sorcerers' secret societies, however -- and this constitutes an essential difference -- never have this kind of totem. Their mvame or guardian is always a spirit, a being that belongs to the spiritual or disembodied world. That spirit may, and often does, manifest itself (we are speaking from the native's point of view) in animal form, though it will not be a true animal, a fact about which sorcerers unanimously agree. The "spirit" manifests itself, they all will say.

4. Every "practititioner" on the day of his initiation and admission into the secret society, receives a particular, individual totem, usually an animal or a bird. But no physical link connects them; as with the personal mvame received at birth, there is simply a spiritual, mystical kinship between the two.

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Every "sorcerer," on the day of his initiation and admission into the secret society, also forms an alliance with an animal, but that union has quite a special character. There is a real, physical kinship acquired by an exchange of blood, and a real alliance so that from that day onward the animal obeys the man and the man the animal: their lives are bound together. [439]

Strictly speaking, that animal is therefore not really a totem in the sence I have defined. The natives give it a special name: the ɛ̄lâñɛ́la. European writers, ethnographers, and others, have referred to it as a nagual, and all the phenomena connected with the nagual is called nagualism. It has almost always been confused with the individual totem; nothing could be more unsuitable or actually more untrue.

[Two paragraphs and tables omitted on pp. 439-450. --Translator] [451]

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator]

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1. Sorcerers, following the example of practitioners, have and still do set up secret societies:

a) throughout the entire Fan tribe;

b) in neighboring Bantu tribes.

I might here point out that I have never come across such associations among other African peoples, such as the Pygmies.

2. These secret societies meet at night in very mysterious fashion.

[786] 3. They are always essentially licentious to such a degree that, according to many writers, unbridled obscenity is the main objective. In my opinion, it is primarily an accompanying circumstance, aimed at controlling and binding the initiates by means of highly erotic and degrading pleasures.

However -- and this is my final point here -- there is one fact which has many a time misled the most conscientious observers, the most eager to learn the truth, and which, combined with the rule of secrecy, curiously complicates the problem. Just as practitioners have ranks and a hierarchy in their secret societies, so sorcerers have instituted ranks and a highly organized hierarchy. Hence there are several kinds of gatherings. Sometimes there is a sort of general assembly for all who belong to the association, in which case the purpose is a celebration, almost always of revolting obscenity and cruelty. All the witnesses clearly agree on this point.

But beside these "general" celebrations for the whole membership, there are others of a much more secret character to which only sorcerers, the true and sole leaders of these assemblies, are invited. Notified by a password to which I shall shortly refer, they gather at the appointed place and there [452] a very particular kind of feast takes place about which it is difficult to give precise details. It can well be imagined that those who belong to these associations keep silent. The rule of secrecy is absolute and inexorable; moreover, their own interest is at stake. It will always be very hard, if not impossible, to throw light on many facts and factors whose disclosure would nevertheless be extremely valuable from the religious point of view.

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

754 575 828 Sorcerers meet on certain days at a specified place. In most cases this meeting has been decided upon in advance at the previous gathering. But it may also happen that the high chief wants to convene his followers unexpectedly. How then is this done?

The manner is most mysterious.

A chief whom I once questioned on this subject told me that he heard the call during his sleep, that a "voice" informed him of the day, hour, and spot, and that this happened quite often. What is to be made of this reply? I must admit that I do not know. It can be stated definitely that certain sorcerers [453] are very clever at thought transmission even over long distances; such difficulties do not bother them.

One day I observed the following: I was chatting freely in a hut with a Fan who considered himself a friend of ours and who did, in fact, do us many services. I was sitting on his bamboo bed and he on a stool facing me. Suddenly I noticed a little bundle of sticks, some painted red, the others white, a few pointed, the rest not. What was most astonishing was that it seemed to me that the fairly large bundle had not been there a moment before. I hastily called it to our friend's attention because he could not have seen it, having his back turned. . . ,

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

"It 's nothing, don't pay any attention," he said. He picked up the bundle and hid it carefully, adding, "Above all, don't mention it to anyone -- you would do me a great deal of harm!"

As his reply did not satisfy me, I wanted a further explanation.

"No, no!" he kept repeating, "It's a deep secret (endzâ̊ndzâ̊ ẽki, lit., the forbidden mystery)."

754 575 828 203 At last after much urging, he decided to admit, after making me promise never to say anything to anyone, that he was a sorcerer of the Ngil rite and that this was the way of convening the next meeting.

"According to the color painted on the sticks," he said, "I know where I'm to go; the number of sticks tells me how many days until my departure for the meeting; the white ones indicate

754 575 828 203 the leaders who will be there, as each has his private mark. That's all."

"But why are some pointed and others not?"

"Oh, that! No, that's a deep secret. If I were to tell you that I'd be punished by death at the next meeting."

[Pages 454-462 omitted. --Translator] [463]

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

791 754 575 782 266 All practitioners' societies recognize ritual sacrifice. In many cases a human victim is slain and eaten. These sacrifices are often characterized by what seems to us revolting cruelty and horror. I shall have occasion to deal with this point more fully when discussing sacrifice.

These are ritual sacrifices: immolation is not done for the pleasure of killing any more than consuming the victim is for the pleasure of eating human flesh. This is so much the case that a woman is never sacrificed: "Munga kɛ́ dzamadzam, kɛ́ kie ve nsissim: A woman is of no importance (from the sacrificial point [562 774] of view)," runs a Fan proverb, "She has no power over spirits because she has no soul."

At sorcerer's feasts, on the contrary, and in the societies they organize, men are eaten for the pleasure of eating human flesh.

754 According to all the Fan and all Africans, sorcerers leave their boeies in order to go and feed on the hearts of other men while asleep. Hence their name, bɛ́ndzi bur, eaters of men. Sometimes they do this themselves, sometimes it is done by a spirit that possesses them. I willingly admit, of course, that there is nothing true in these accusations, at least as regards the way in which the sorcerers work. But one thing is undeniable, the fact of cannibalism.

[One paragraph omitted; p. 464 omitted. --Editor]

Chapter XIV

Totems of Sorcerers and of their Secret Societies

The Nagual and Nagualism

[Summary omitted--Translator] [466].

●754 The foregoing pages have shown the close connections and also the great differences between practitioners and sorcerers. The connections arise from what is often identity of person; the differences are due to entirely unlike and often contrary purposes.

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator]

... A major cause of confusion ... derives, it seems to me, from the various totems that can belong to the same sorcerer, for several different reasons. Furthermore, the transformation of a sorcerer into an animal, often attributed to him, rightly or wrongly, plays a large part.

Hence the following points may be usefully made:

The different totems of any sorcerer belong to three distinct categories corresponding to:

1. his being a member of a tribe;

2. his ability to be a practitioner at the same time as a sorcerer;

3. his being a real sorcerer.

1. In belonging to a tribe, like any warrior each sorcerer has the following totems: a) tribal, b) clan, c) phratry, d) family, e) individual.

I have dealt with these different totems and pointed out that they can be, and often are, embodied in one and the same totem. [467]

2. From his ability to be a practitioner, a sorcerer possesses two totems: an individual totem and a class totem.

There is nothing to prevent these totems from being similar, or even the same as, the totems of the first category. In such a case they reinforce one another; power is thereby increased and, though the totemic prohibitions may be more strict, their observance is also easier. In fact, practitioners often give the clan or family totem as individual totems to novices provided that it be an "animal" totem. The class totem, already in existence, is thus independent of the particular will of the "admitting" practitioner or initiator, as well as of the "candidate."

3. As a sorcerer:

a) The sorcerer has no individual totem but a "dedicated animal." I shall indicate the great differences between "totem" and "dedicated animal."

154 b) Imitating the classes of practitioners, the classes of initiates controlled by sorcerers have class totems. These classes are recruited each within his own tribe.

154 575 c) The societies composed only of sorcerers are recruited from many different tribes, as the need arises, whatever may be the political relations, hostile or not. The societies embrace the whole nation. A sorcerer is always allied to every other sorcerer, at least from the point of view of organization, for often their struggle for influence is implacable.

These sorcerer's societies do not have totems but obey a spirit.

154 825 I have already mentioned the various changes of form assumed by sorcerers, and I shall return to this briefly in order to show that the different forms must not be confused, as has often been done, with the nagual, or sorcerer's "dedicated animal."

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

[Page 468 and three paragraphs on p. 469 omitted. --Translator] [469]

Having eliminated all totems that do not belong to the sorcerer as such, the following points confront us:

1. At first glance each sorcerer appears to have his totem -- animal, bird, reptile -- to which he pays particular tribute. [470]

The majority of writers apply the word nagual, nyarong, etc., to this familiar animal, and the group of facts connected with the nagual is naturally called nagualism. Now these writers see in the nagual, nyarong, etc., and in nagualism nothing but a special form of totem and totemism. Is this opinion justified -- is the nagual a totem?

[Three paragraphs omitted. --Translator] [471] [Three paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

The nagual, according to Van Gennep, following Lang, is the local name of the individual totem.

As regards the Fan I should not agree, and all the investigations we have been able to make among neighboring tribes as well as in Madagascar (to whom Van Gennep refers) bear out this opinion. The nagual is not the local name of the individual totem but of "an" individual totem, or better still -- for I do not

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admit to there being a "totem" involved -- of an animal "dedicated" to certain persons, few in number, who, in the case in point, are the sorcerers. I therefore make the following proposals:

1. The nagual is not the local name of the individual totem but the local name of the animal guardian of "certain" individuals -- two different conceptions corresponding to different purposes. And I write, not "totem," but -- which is not the same -- "animal guardian." ... [472]

2. Nagual and nagualism closely "approximate" totem and totemism in the sense that in both there is an animal guardian and a group of facts connected with this guardian, but they are differentiated completely in the sense that:

a) The totem in its basic form, that is, as a family or tribal totem, is not alive at the present time, but had lived formerly and handed down its attributes and especially the efficacy of its alliance to all its descendants, but actually only to its descendants now alive.

The nagual, on the other hand, has no existence as a family or tribal nagual. The nagual that would seem to be the protector of a group (like a secret society) is the protector of "the chief" of the group and not the whole group.

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

b) Since the nagual constitutes a unit not a group, it could not be a totem, and therefore nagualism is entirely different from totemism.

Finally, in line with what has been said, individual totems cannot disappear: the actual death of such or such panther [473] may or may not affect tribe, clan, family, or individual, of which it is, not the but a totem. But the death of that panther will in no way be the death of the totem, since the panther totem is a group just as much for the tribe as for the individual.

On the other hand, the death of such or such panther, the nagual of a certain sorcerer, will profoundly affect him, because, not a collective group, but an individual unit is concerned. A dead nagual can never be replaced. It is bad luck for the sorcerer, who loses by the death of his dedicated animal the most active agent of his authority and power. His own life is often linked with

757 575 that of his nagual and vice versa. If he is ill or if he dies, his nagual suffers or dies; if the nagual dies or suffers, so the man dies or suffers.

[Pp. 474-480 omitted. --Translator] [481]

Initiation of the Practitioner

575 791 The practitioner at the time of his initiation undergoes a different kind of test from that which young [ordinarily] men do. These tests are distinguished by a more marked degree of cruelty and especially by the offering of a victim. The victim will first be dedicated in special rites. After the tests and when the neophyte has been judged fit to enter the priestly company, then only is the totem chosen. But the choice is not left to the candidate; the "admitting" practitioner gives it to him. He must first of all undergo a severe fast of at least seven days. During this time he is forbidden absolutely, under any pretext, to leave his hut, which is set apart in a portion of the forest reserved to practitioners and called éli bɛ́ngan. No person is allowed to approach. Any intercourse with women, even a mere glance, [362 688] would bring about permanent exclusion. Moreover, the woman would be put to death, and her father or husband would have no right to compensation, pecuniary or other.

During the neophyte's seclusion his "admitting" [practitioner] has chosen the totem; avoiding many complications, he almost always chooses the class totem to which the confraternity is already dedicated.

What kind of totems are they? They never belong to the mineral realm, nor are they ever celestial phenomena, nor spirits of any sort, materialized or not, as happens with clan or tribal totems.

575 791 825 The class totem is usually a bird [or] a swiftly moving animal, rarely a fierce one when the choice would be made because of the animal's positive qualities and not for its power to harm. Indeed the secret society prefers to seek as protecting totems, those that will guarantee swift and sure retreat in case

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The ceremony is altogether secret in the sense that no layman may be present, but it remains a legal ceremony, and [484] everyone in the village -- if only through having had to stay away -- knows where and when it takes place. However, it must not be mentioned by anyone. Anyone doing so would have to pay a fine, usually of a fowl or its equivalent in value.

Thus the totem initiation of practitioner belongs to the ordinary scheme of things.

That of the sorcerer is quite different.

Initiation of the Sorcerer; the Nagual

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In a book (1) published several years ago, the author, Mgr.

> 1. Sous le Ciel d'Afrique, Recits d'un Missionaire [Under the African Sky], A Missionary's Account], by the Rev. Father Buléon, Congregation of the Holy Ghost, pp. 88 ff.

Buléon ... gives an eyewitness account of the sorcerer's initiation. ...

[Footnote omitted. --Translator]

"To be initiated as a sorcerer means being initiated by secret ceremonies into certain rites through which one may gain some signal favor from a spirit whose power one recognizes. ...

"Motivated by revenge, avarice, or ambition, an African one day leaves his village, to which he only expects to return when armed with the mysterious and terrible power that will allow him to satisfy his desires. His journey's end may be distant; often he has excellent reasons for seeking, far away and usually outside his tribe, someone who will confer marvelous privileges upon him. His absence sometimes lasts [485] several months. ...

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

"The candidate is seated on the ground, wearing only a loincloth and tattooed more than the others. Undermined by severe privations made more hazardous by being uninterrupted,

515 subjected to skillfully graduated demands, participating in cere-
• 754 monies that arouse his imagination while exhausting him by their length, he gradually grows weaker and feels overwhelmed by the somber and mysterious aspect of initiation and falls into a kind of hallucination.

"In the depths of the hut [where the initiation takes place], there is a crudely sculptured image. Beneath that has been put a bundle containing the bones of a man long dead, and in front a mirror has been hung with its face towards the spectators. In all initiation proceedings the candidate is brought before the mirror and asked: 'What do you see?' For a long time he has to reply: 'I don't see anything.' As long as the reply is negative the initiation has not been successful. But finally the expected sign appears; he sees the likeness of a man in the mirror. Then he is led aside and made to describe the man whose face he has just seen. He had never seen him before [486] and cannot have known him, yet he describes him with great precision, giving all the facial traits. No cheating is possible in this. From the description given, the initiator, who is able to judge the likeness, identifies the man whose bones are beneath the image. This proof allows him to decide that the initiation is proceeding on the right track.

"Sometimes the initiator demands more personal and more active cooperation from the person seeking initiation. ... he may require that he bring the skull and a few bones of a relative of the first degree. ...

"Only when he brings in the material proofs of his crime
[266] are the final rites carried out. The bones are thrown into a cauldron with herbs and other ingredients that are unsavoury. When the horrible mixture has been sufficiently cooked, the unfortunate man is made to drink a cup while the audience sings. Then what is left in the pot is divided, and everyone has a share.
[789] The small bones are wrapped in old rags, and this bundle is given to the initiate: it constitutes his talisman, which he will wear and which will protect him from the dangers he fears and obtain for him the favors he desires.

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"There would seem to be nothing further except to pay the initiator and to carry away the treasure so dearly and criminally bought. But there is still a final ceremony. Initiator and initiate both are actors and witnesses in a strange scene which I should not describe were it not as authentic as it is apparently unbelievable. The new initiate's life is to be united through a bloody rite to that of an animal, who will thereafter be his personal animal, not a domestic or tame animal, but a wild beast living in the depths of the forest or the bed of a river. The initiator has made the necessary arrangements; he gives a signal: [487] at first no sound is heard in reply but soon in the bright moonlight an unknown participant is seen approaching the spot in the forest where it is awaited -- sometimes an enormous mass with a monstrous head, sometimes a feline form that crawls rather than walks, sometimes a long body that unwinds and undulates. Whatever the animal -- hippopotamus, panther, or snake -- it forgets the timidity or ferocity felt in the presence of man and submits docilely to the desired operation. Then the exchange of blood takes place. How this is done is not our concern. But what is beyond any doubt is the fact that blood is let, of the animal and of the initiate, and that each is inoculated with the other's blood. The animal's ear is slit (a corresponding cut is made upon a snake) as a mark [304] of the link established with the man, in whose arm an incision is made so that he in turn is marked with the sign of the beast. (1)

1. [The footnote, referring to mediaeval witchcraft practices, is omitted. --Translator]

A real link henceforth exists between them. The animal will be at the beck and call of the person who has been made his master. I could name ... a certain Black man who at night receives a vulture or a panther with slit ear, and another who allows into his hut and even his bed (ikoko) a python that recognizes his authority. When day comes, and the tasks have been

575 754 825 performed, the animals return to lake or bush, just as dangerous, often more so, to all whose blood they have not received.

"This union is so close between animal and man that the life of one depends upon that of the other.

"How many examples I could give! Should you kill a panther that bears the mark, you will not long afterwards learn of the death of some sorcerer. Should the sorcerer be the first to die, don't be surprised at finding near the village the dead body of his personal animal."

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator] [488]

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator]

In contrast [to the position with regard] to totems, both men and women can have a nagual, since both can be sorcerers. Yet those naguals are not the same for both sexes.

Among the Fan, the naguals that belong to men, with rare exceptions, are:

1. panther, incorrectly called tiger, nze; and by far the most frequent.

2. black snake, elom, sometimes the python, mvom.

3. crocodile, nkôm, rarely the ngân or cayman, never the earth saurians.

4. hippopotamus, ngübe or nguve.

5. wild boar, ngü.

6. vulture, nkôn, but very rarely.

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator]

The naguals belonging to women are:

1. black snake, kagélakagéla, different from the mvom.

2. vulture, nkôn. [489]

3. earth saurians; rarely the crocodile.

4. a kind of owl or night bird, akûn.

5. green snake found in banana trees, fôl.

6. a kind of horned viper, fî.

[Nine paragraphs omitted on p. 489. --Translator] [Page 490 omitted. --Translator] [491]

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator]

The élânéla, may quite well also belong to the animal clan to which individual, clan, or tribal totems are related, and this

515 754 825 can lead to much confusion. Sorcerers are people particularly eager to conceal themselves and at the same time to assert their power, and they are often clever at doing so. They succeed in disguising the real nature of their nagual: "It's my totem," they will say, if someone surprises them with their élâńela. To be able to make their supposed totems appear at will often gives them special authority, which they can make good use of in certain circumstances. Indeed, one can imagine the prestige gained by a sorcerer who during a ritual ceremony thus calls on his totem, in reality his nagual. But ordinarily he restrains himself, for he would then unmask his sorcerer's character, and, unless he is all-powerful and protected from revenge, that is not at all what he has in mind. ...

[614] According to certain chiefs, especially among the Bękwę, the totem of the founder of the race or clan was originally his élâńela. This is perfectly admissible. If by one or another means the founder of tribe or clan was able to bind an animal to his will, to make it obedient, or at least to persuade his followers that this was so -- which amounts to the same thing -- these men may very readily, after his death, choose his élaneła for their totem. But this choice, which is determined by circumstances or the wish of the dying chief, does not imply that it remains an élâńela. On the contrary, this characteristic [492] disappeared by the very fact of its becoming a totem and ceasing to be a unit in order to become a collective group through its descendants.

[Two paragraphs omitted--Translator]

In a certain number of cases it has happened that the nagual is confused with the sorcerer himself. In fact, according to the Africans, sorcerers often transform themselves into animals. ...

[Three paragraphs omitted. --Translator] [493]

[Three paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

Almost always, I am convinced, these [phenomena] may be attributed to men being disguised as animals, either to safely satisfy their murderous impulses or to obtain victims for feasts of human flesh.

In some cases these men act under the mysterious influence of unknown agents. This perhaps involves a kind of unconscious

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possession. They believe and declare themselves to be really transformed into animals. ...

Finally, when it is not a question of the [sorcerer] in disguise (which is nearly always the case), one often deals with his nagual, obedient to his instructions and prompting, at least in the beginning. After the animal has tasted human flesh [494] it is eager to return of its own accord. I remember that in a village in the interior, a panther had devoured 37 persons within a year. A sorcerer was accused of having the animal under his command and, as a result, after confession he was killed. The next day the panther was found dead in the forest. A coincidence? Perhaps the sorcerer had made use of the panther the first time, but in connection with the other killings, I have my doubts. In any case, this panther had an ear slit by human hand, as I was able to verify. Without passing judgement on the outcome, this was an obvious sign that it was "dedicated."

In their main outlines, the sorcerers' confraternities [sic] are modeled on those of practitioners. Both, therefore, possess two distinct categories of confraternity, or secret society, one set composed of initiates directed and controlled by practitioners and sorcerers, the other composed solely of practitioners or sorcerers.

1. Societies composed of initiates directed by sorcerers each has its totem, as do the similar societies directed by practitioners. This totem is always an animal -- a custom found almost universally and made necessary by the very concept of the totem.

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2. Secret societies composed solely of sorcerers do not have totems; they obey a spirit.

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator] [495]

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

This spirit bears the name, engungure. It is also the name of the khun, or ghosts, or even of the souls of the dead after the postmortuary exercises and the final transformations.

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776 idea as the Bulu regarding two great gods. The *Zambe* of the Bulu is the *Anyambi* or *Sekóme* of the Fang, the *tata* or father of all things; and another god of less power than *Anyambi* or *Sekóme*, who lives in the forests and is so tall that he gathers fruit from the highest trees. Some of the old men and women profess to have seen this god of the forests.

[775] Fang superstition includes transmigration; a departed human soul may enter any animal dwelling on top of the earth or in it. There are spirits of health and disease, also a protecting spirit belonging to a clan or tribe, in whose honour a small basket is hung in the palaver house, containing portions of the skull of an albino, whenever obtainable, also portions of the skulls of a relative and a chimpanzee, human hair, nails and bones. This fetish or *biang* is called the *Biang Akamayong*. Most Fang have a cabalistic word assigned to them by the *ngangan* (witch doctor), and this word is used as a prayer. During the new moon, dances are nearly always indulged in, and the songs usually addressed to the spirits of Present and Future. Local spirits need constant propitiation; a native passing in his canoe a spot where a local spirit dwells, as a large rock, will pay his respects by casting a piece of his food into the river, or when in the forest a few stones or a piece of *mbóa* (cassava) is laid at the root of some great tree.

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778 Wooden idols are not plentiful among the Fang tribes living along the rivers; they are seen more in the palaver houses of the bush towns.

Charms.—These may be only cabalistic words, and under this head of vocal charms must be included the incantations of the *ngangan* (witch doctor).

Material charms.—These are by far the most common; the belief in material charms, fetish, occupies the most prominent place in Fang religious contemplation.

Among the Fang, the English word Fetish, from the Portuguese word Feticio, is *Biang* (medicine). A Fang fetish is any material object which the *ngangan* (doctor) has consecrated and made a fit abiding place for a spirit. What may be consecrated? Anything, absolutely anything; a shell, rag, stone, twig of a tree, horns, nails, etc. The horns of small antelope and large deer are filled with resins, nails, human hair, faeces, etc. To bewitch a person it is necessary to give the *ngangan* a piece of the hair, nail, a portion of the food or a drop of blood of the person to be bewitched. A Fang is most careful if he cuts himself to see that only friends and relations approach him until the bleeding has ceased, and hair when cut is usually burnt without delay. As mentioned in the section of this paper on food, every child during infancy is subjected to certain rites which constitute his or her *Eki*, prohibiting the child from eating a certain kind of food or performing a certain act. Thus far, the superstitious beliefs of the Fang and Bulu are precisely similar, and I gathered from Dr. Nassau at Gaboon many facts connected with the people among whom he laboured, the Mpongwe, which showed that they also held superstitious beliefs very nearly, and in some cases precisely similar to those of the Bulu and Fang, the only difference being in the

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789 *bieti*). He brings it. He eats the fowl. When finished, he takes a bone of the fowl and the excrement of the *bieti*. He cuts his nails and his hair. He ties (all these things) up in a bundle or packs them inside the horn of a small deer and keeps it.

When a man goes on a journey he carries this medicine with him. Another person cannot see him as he journeys.

This is the *Biang e Soli*.

Biang-nkama.—The people get up and take machetes and cut a clearing. When they have finished the clearing is open and bright. If a man has died and been long in the grave, they take his bones, and lay them out on the ground. They cover them over with earth. They take other bones, and cut them up into small pieces. They put (these pieces) in a basket: they put in also red dye, and scrapings from the bark of trees. They close up the basket. If they go to war, they carry the basket (suspended by a cord from) the shoulder. They take the red dye which is in the basket and smear the body with it. If an enemy (literally, a person) [726] fires a gun (at them), they will not be pierced (by the pieces of iron pot used as bullets).

This is the *Biang-nkama*. Do not tell it to women or children; only to grown real men—for it is tabooed.

Nzake Bukun.—Fang make it thus. If a man makes witch medicine, he kills ● 754 his brother and other people. They say, let us make *nzake bukun*. They take a corpse, and go with it to the bush. They cut bush. The bush is clear and open. They sweep clear the place which they have cut. They lay down the corpse in the place which they have swept. They dig plenty of dirt, and make it in the shape of an elephant (over the corpse). They make the trunk, the tusks, the eyes, the legs, the tail, the ears. They finish and return to the town. They say, we have made *nzake bukun* (*nzake* means elephant). They say if a man goes out to kill by witchcraft, he will die. If a man wishes to kill another with poison, he will die. If a man lies with a woman in the daytime he will die. Let not a woman eat a pig. And so they say, they have made this fetish, the *nzake-bukun*. When they have done so, if a man lies with a woman in the daytime he gets sick. They go and scrape trees in the bush; they bring water from the river, and put the scrapings in the water. They catch a fowl outside and put it in the medicine-water. They touch the man's body over with the fowl. And so that man, they heal him from his fetish-sickness. Then he is well.

This is *Nzake bukun*.

Biang-abationg.—If a man has married two or three women, and loves one, but 832 dislikes the others, the latter feel badly. They make *biang abationg*. When they [514] go to pass their faeces, they take a very small piece of their faeces. They rub off the grease from their skin, and mix this grease with the small piece of dung. They put it (the mixture) on the drying-shelf (over the fire). When it is dry they mash it to powder, and put it in the neck of a gourd. They take also a shrub called *abatoñ* (known only by women) and put it in a small gourd (not the neck of

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The skin of a bush cat is part of the *biang-akanayong* called "Nsin." 789

The Mvang.—A triangular piece of iron filled with medicine, used to keep away witches, is also part of the *biang-akamayong.* 619

Biang-akong or *biang-abal* (war medicine).—This is also part of the *biang-akamayong*, and the shots from the guns of an enemy are of no avail.

One other important fetish hangs with the *biang-akamayong.*

A piece of very hard wood. Only a certain kind of woman is selected to find this wood; she is called a special or *selected* woman on account of certain peculiarities connected with her, *e.g.*, she always fails to catch fish, she may try all day but will not succeed in catching fish. The husband of such a woman, after intercourse with her, fails to catch fish the next day, he also fails to work. This is the kind of woman always selected to find this wood; it is hard wood, she is a hard woman, and she is called *Emunega ane alert* (the woman who is hard). This medicine is also called *biang-akong*, and shot from the guns of an enemy will not harm. [777] [824]

This is the *Biang-akamayong.*

XIII.—*Witchcraft. Evus.* (*Witch.*)

If a person goes out to make witch (witch medicine, or play witch to harm others) he dies. The people take him to the backyard. Other people say, "We want to take the witch." If the corpse is a female, they open the belly. If the corpse is a male, they open the heart. They see the witch, they take it. If they bring the witch, they lay it on the smoke shelf. It dries. When finished drying they say, "We will use it as medicine." 754

This is *Evus* (witch).

Cursing dead Relations.—Written at Foulabifong, Nkomo river, April 13th, 1898. Told me by Ôvôn; fully confirmed by Ogandaga and Interpreter Roby.

E'kanesong (to curse dead relations).—This is a Fang custom. A man has a palaver with another, or goods stolen. He desires to get even with the thief. He calls a friend and curses his friend's dead relations, saying, 754 578

"Go and kill that person for me, or go and make him pay me goods; if you do so, I will then pay you for having cursed your dead relations." It is a serious matter to have dead relations cursed, and the friend feels very bad. He must do as bid, or he is branded as a coward, and after he has completed his task he then makes claim for payment. 626

Nge me bā jam dili, nge me ta minbin (If I do it, may I see the corpses [of my people]). A Fang way of swearing an oath. [539

Ami ye mimbim mia, yinga me bat (My friend, by the corpses of your relations, kill those people for me).

Notes on *Ebómeda* (a curse).

Ilong s'ayoge (a curse that kills).

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754 *Vazege me ilong onga lóm me* (Take away the curse you have [sent] put
578 upon me).
626 *Vazege me bibomeda* (Take away the curse).
539 *Vazege me biyoge* (Take away the curse).
Bót bene mbómeda ch Anyambe edjam e mam mebē móa (People are cursed of God on account of their sins).

XIV.—*The Ngi.* (*A Fang Secret Society.*)

575 To members (*Bemvon*) the following things or *bityi* are forbidden :—
Bityi :—

1. To go and make or play at witch (make *evus*).
2. A male fowl is not to be eaten (shared) by two men of different clans.
3. Fish called *ngole* must not be partaken of with a woman.
4. Only the initiated are permitted to eat the fish called *ngone*.
5. Only the initiated may witness the Ngi dances. A woman who attempts to witness an Ngi dance will sicken and die.
6. Only the initiated must know about the bones used by Ngi.
7. A member of the Ngi society is not permitted to sleep on his back.
8. Food refuse must not be destroyed by fire.
9. To spit in the fire is against the law of Ngi (not permitted).
10. An uninitiated person will die if embraced by an Ngi.
11. To kick over rotten wood, logs, or forest stumps, is forbidden.
12. To cut a stick half through in the bush, and then bring it to town and break it, is forbidden. It must be cut through and the two pieces carried.
13. To kick the feet together after getting in bed, for the purpose of removing dust, is forbidden.

The violation of any of these mentioned *bityi* will bring misfortune and death on the *bemvon* (member).

Ngi means gorilla among the Fang; Nji means gorilla among the Bulu. The Bulu have the Nji secret society, which is reported as being precisely similar to the Fang Ngi; it came to the Bulu from the Fang.

XV.—*War.*

726 During a tribal war all adults act as warriors. There is no regular organisation of fighting men. It is a typical guerilla warfare. Parties of young men go forth at night to attack towns; others watch the forest paths to shoot men passing and [181] women going to work in the gardens. The Fang are noted for their love of war; they are the most warlike people in all West Africa. When a tribal war is on, a headman frequently goes out with a raiding party to attack the town; he carries with him the *biang-akamayong* (protecting medicine of the tribe). The usual mode of attack is as follows: Having decided to attack a town, the party of men (usually ten or